

COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN HOME MAKING

CLASSES IN OKLAHOMA

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COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN HOME MAKING  
CLASSES IN OKLAHOMA

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Introduction	1
II. Commercial Contests	4
III. Interpretation of data	
A. Teachers' Questionnaire	16
1. Uses of Commercial Contests	17
2. Factors Influencing the Use of Commercial Contests	35
B. Students' Questionnaire	41
C. Parents' Questionnaire	50
IV. Conclusions	55
V. Bibliography	58
VI. Appendix	
A. Letter of Instruction	i
B. Teachers' Questionnaire	ii
C. Students' Questionnaire	vi
D. Parents' Questionnaire	viii

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## INTRODUCTION

The idea of contests is not new since Ancient and Medieval history is rich with the colorful tales of the Greek Olympic games, the Roman chariot races, and the tournaments of the Anglo-Saxons. American pioneers wrote glowing accounts of the Indians' contests, of physical strength and of the competition in games and sports enjoyed by busy colonists. Later contests came to be used in the schools. Perhaps the "spelling bee" was the first form of competition in which school children participated, but eventually the athletic, forensic, and inter-scholastic contests found a place in the educational system.

Commercial companies realizing that contests are of interest to many people are using this knowledge in their publicity campaigns. Many companies use prize winning contests as a means of advertising and of promoting the sale of their products. The extent of the use of commercial contests is shown in the following quotation from a recent issue of the Literary Digest:

"There are some twenty general types of contests with variations including photography, art, literature, cross-word puzzles, recipes, word-building, numeral paths, letters and statements. More than 900,000 persons wrote letters to a tobacco company in one week. Five hundred thousand letters answered a St. Louis brewery test. More than 1,250,000 camera enthusiasts entered an inter-national photography competition. Another quarter million housewives wrote slogans for a condensed milk contest."<sup>1</sup>

Through radio announcements, newspaper and magazine advertisements,

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1. Contest Prizes: Twenty Million Americans Lured by \$12,000,000 Annual Offers. Literary Digest, November 2, 1936, vol. 122, p.7.

and through "specialized journals written by and for contest entrants"<sup>2</sup> the public is made aware of, and interest is created in commercial contests. Considering the fact that commercial contests have become a recognized means of advertising, it is not surprising to find a number of these contests planned for school room use. Several such contests are especially designed for classes in home making. Most of these have developed within the past fifteen years. During this period at least twenty-four commercial contests of interest to home making students have been introduced. A few of these were short lived, being discontinued after a few years, but most of them have continued year after year.

Since the educational value of commercial contests is debatable and the main objective of the company sponsoring them is to advertise their product, some educators are questioning their use in class room work. At the 19th Annual Southern Regional Conference in Birmingham, Alabama, March 22nd to 29th, 1937, state supervisors and teacher trainers in home economics education discussed the use of commercial contests in the teaching of home making. The delegates present at this conference decided that a more thorough study of the question should be made before any definite resolutions could be adopted by the group.

Since no information was available concerning the use of commercial contests in home making classes in Oklahoma, it was felt that this would be a worth while subject for a thesis. This study attempts to determine (1) what commercial contests are used in home making classes;

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2. Ibid.

(2) how they are conducted; (3) what factors influence the choice; and (4) the reactions of parents and students regarding them. The names of the contests of interest to students in home making classes were secured through personal interviews with home economics teachers; through letters of inquiry to commercial concerns, and through a study of current educational magazines. The rules and regulations concerning the commercial contests reported in this study were obtained directly from the sponsors, from home economics teachers, or from recent magazines. A careful study of the contest materials was made and questionnaires for the purpose of securing information regarding their use were prepared. A questionnaire seeking information concerning the use of commercial contests in home making classes was sent to 235 home economics teachers in 230 towns throughout Oklahoma. Four hundred and seventy questionnaires requesting information from parents concerning their reactions toward the use of commercial contests, and 1425 questionnaires asking students for similar information were distributed through home economics teachers. Each teacher contacted was asked to secure the information requested from two parents and five students in her locality.



## COMMERCIAL CONTESTS

Most companies sponsoring commercial contests of interest to home making classes specify or suggest the manner in which the contest should be conducted. In order to study or evaluate any contest it is necessary to become familiar with the conditions governing the competition, hence a summary of the rules and regulations of the commercial contests investigated are included in this study. While all contests listed on the questionnaires were not designed exclusively for home making classes, they are closely related to the field of home economics, and could be used if desired.

One of the first commercial contests especially planned for home making classes was the Meat Story Contest sponsored by the National Live Stock and Meat Board of Chicago. In 1937 they announced their Fourteenth Annual Meat Story Contest and the Second Annual Meat Poster Contest. Any student taking a course in home economics or who had completed a course in home economics was eligible to enter the Meat Story Contest. To compete it was necessary to write an essay of not more than 1,000 words on one of the following subjects: (1) "Why the Growing Child needs Meat"; (2) "Modern Methods of Meat Cookery"; (3) "Know Your Meat Cut"; (4) "The Value of Meat in the Diet"; and (5) "Meat the Center of the Meal." The stories submitted were scored on the subject matter included, the method of presentation, and the neatness of the paper. Twenty-five national prizes totaling \$1,000 were offered. The awards ranged from \$300.00, first prize, half of which was a scholarship, to fifteen prizes of \$10.00 each.

Additional awards of \$5.00 were given to the best writer in each state not represented among the national winners. In addition to these cash prizes, each state and national winner received in recognition of achievement an engraved certificate bearing the signatures of the home economics authorities who acted as judges. A prize of \$50.00 was also given to the teacher whose students sent in the best essays and a handsome trophy was awarded to the school submitting the best group of essays.

The purpose of the Meat Poster Contest was to show the food value of meat, and this contest was open to all high school students. Posters entered in competition were judged on the originality shown by the student, the effectiveness of the poster as a whole, the artistic quality of the presentation, and the theme used. Awards offered were similar to those given for the Meat Story Contest. In answer to a letter of inquiry, the National Live Stock and Meat Board reported that approximately 2,000 entries were received annually in each contest, and over 20,000 requests were made for rules and regulations concerning them.

Another group of contests were sponsored by the Home Makers' Educational Service of Freeport, New York. These contests were known as: the "Home Maker, Student Essay"; "Personality"; "Certificate of Award"; and "H.M. Standard Product Note Book." Other contests which the Home Makers' Educational Service has announced and distributed material for are: the "Annual Kitchen Planning Competition" sponsored by the Crane Company; the "Home Dyeing Contest" sponsored by the North American Dye Corporation; the "Home Baking Contest" sponsored by the Rumford Baking Powder Company; and the "Dressmaking and Doll Dress-

making Contests" sponsored by the Simplicity Pattern Company. Home economics students were eligible to enter all these contests.

The Home Maker Student Essay Contest was first introduced in 1930. The conditions of the sixth annual contest restricted the subject of the essay to "How my Home Economics Education Helps Me at Home" and limited the discussion to 2,000 words. The treatment of the subject was to be of the students own choosing but based upon the true facts regarding her application of her home making instruction. The teacher arranged a local committee to select the three prize winning essays and to award prize ribbons to the winners. Entries in the National Contest were the result of the local contest. The first prize winning essay from each school was entered in the National competition. National winners received a first prize of \$50.00; second prize of \$25.00; third prize of \$15.00; fourth prize of \$10.00, and a fifth prize of \$5.00.

The Personality contest which was conducted locally consisted of a term project in personal improvement. The sponsors suggested that each student who participated in the contest be provided with a mimeographed copy of the score card published in the Home Makers Bulletin. Characteristics included on the score card were: health, grooming, appearance, personal attributes, personal qualities, and attitude toward others. Just prior to the close of the contest each student was asked to submit a review essay of not more than 1,000 words covering the following subjects: (a) "My understanding of the meaning and value of personality" (b) "How I have applied the subject to my own life" (c) How my home economics instruction has helped me to do this" (d) "The benefits that have resulted to me from doing this." A total

of 500 points was possible. Two hundred points were allowed on the review essay, and 300 points on personal improvement. Local judges chose the winner who was awarded a certificate from the Home Makers' Educational Service.

The Certificate of Award Competition which was based largely on scholarship in home making classes, provided only local competition. To have won a Certificate of Award a student must have stood well in all her home making courses and must have been considered by her home economics teacher as the best all-round student of the year. The points considered in making the award were: the amount and character of the home work; the score on the final examination; and the general characteristics of the competitors. Each local winner selected by the home economics teacher and fellow students received a Certificate of Award issued by the Home Makers Educational Service.

Students who entered the H.M. Standard Product Note Book Competition were required to make a note book using only material which pertained to Home Makers' Standard Products. The completed note books were judged on (1) the introduction; (2) the value of the information used; (3) the completeness of the note book; (4) the neatness; (5) the convenience of the arrangement used; and (6) the attractiveness of the note book as a whole. The rules of the contest required that at least ten entries prepared by the students themselves were necessary for competition in each school. At the beginning of the contest the Home Makers' Educational Service supplied a set of three prize ribbons to be awarded to the local winners at the close of the contest.



The manner in which the Annual Kitchen Planning Contest sponsored by the Crane Company of Chicago was conducted was wholly optional with the teacher. However, an outlined routine suggested that each contestant submit (1) a sketch of the present home kitchen; (2) a written analysis of its defects; (3) a sketch of the home kitchen as it should be remodeled to conform to the principles of efficiency; (4) a written explanation of the benefits that would result from the suggested change; and (5) a written analysis of efficient kitchen requirements. Local judges appointed by the teacher were to evaluate all papers and plans and to select a winner for the first, second, and third prize ribbons.

In the Home Dyeing Contests sponsored by the North American Dye Corporation of Mount Vernon, New York and advertised by the Home Makers' Educational Service, entries consisted of articles dyed with Dytint. The local teacher was expected to give a demonstration on dyeing before beginning the contest, and to decide on the type of articles to be entered in the competition. At the close of the contest, local judges scored the entries on the general appearance of the article, the technique of dyeing, the evenness of the color, the appropriateness of the color to the article, the appropriateness of the color to the use, and the care in finishing and pressing the article. Three winners in each contest conducted received prize ribbons from the North American Dye Corporation.

The Rumford Company introduced Home Baking Contests which also provided local competition and were open to home economics students. The sponsors provided for contest purposes a score card for each entrant, samples of Rumford baking powder, a folder of suggestions,

and a set of three prize ribbons for the winners. This material was to be used for either a cake or biscuit contest. As in most local contests the final date was set by the teacher. Suggestions were made that the date be announced far enough in advance to allow the students to practice at home and to improve their technique and products. The teacher appointed a committee to select the three best entries and to award the prize ribbons.

The Simplicity Student Sewing Contest and Doll Dress Making Contest were first announced by the Simplicity Pattern Company of New York City in 1935. In the Student Sewing Contest, especially planned for home economics classes, entries consisted of garments made from Simplicity patterns. Standards to be used in judging the entries were determined by the teacher. However, the sponsor suggested that workmanship, suitability of style and fabric, becomingness, neatness, and general appearance be considered. The rules for conducting the contest were: (1) Set a definite period of time over which the contest will extend; (2) Select the judges; (3) Number each entry and keep a record of the numbers and names of the contestants; (4) Send out invitations to the parents and friends of the students, and to a newspaper representative to be present at the awarding of the prizes; (5) Arrange for an exhibit of the entries; (6) The silver engraved pins offered as prizes should be pinned to the prize winning entries; and (7) Have the local newspapers publish an advance notice of the exhibit and later photographs of the prize winning contestants.

One pin was allowed for each sewing class or for each twenty pupils if the classes were large.

Rules governing the Simplicity Doll Dress Making Contest were similar to those of the Student Sewing Contest. The Doll Dress Making Contest was planned for beginners sewing classes. Entries consisted of doll dresses made from Simplicity patterns which were furnished free. The sponsors suggested that in making the awards neatness, diligence, general improvement, and progress might be considered. Local judges selected the three best entries and awarded the prize ribbons which were furnished by the Home Makers' Educational Service. In answer to a letter of inquiry, the Simplicity Pattern Company gave the names and addresses of forty-four schools in Oklahoma where Simplicity contests have been used.

Junior and Senior high school home economics students were eligible to enter the Du Barry Contest under the direction of the Du Barry Fashion Service of New York City, and any garment made from a Du Barry pattern was acceptable as an entry. No definite rules for conducting the contest or standards for judging the garments were given. Suggested rules were similar to those of the Simplicity Student Sewing Contest, and the suggested standards for judging the entries included: (1) the suitability of the fabric for the style; (2) the becomingness of the style to the wearer; (3) the fit of the garment; (4) the workmanship; (5) the technique; and (6) the general appearance of the garment. The sponsors offered a silver pin to one winner in each sewing class, or in large classes one pin was given for each twenty students enrolled. The Du Barry Pattern Company sent upon request the names and addresses of twenty-four schools in Oklahoma where their contest had been conducted.

Another sewing contest was sponsored by the Advance Pattern Company of New York City. This was a local contest open to home making classes, and any garment made from an Advance Pattern could be entered in the competition. The sponsors suggested that each teacher conduct the contest and make the awards according to the requirements of her classes. The teacher appointed judges who selected one winner from each class and awarded the silver pins which were provided by the Advance Pattern Company.

The McCall Company directed a Class Sewing Contest and Fashion Show for home economics students. Garments made from a McCall Pattern were acceptable as entries. These were judged on (1) the general appearance of the garment; (2) the quality of the workmanship; (3) the individuality shown and the becomingness to the wearer; and (4) the style of the garment. At the close of the contest a McCall Fashion Show and Contest Judging were held for the contestants, and local judges selected three winners. The sponsors furnished a set of three prize ribbons to be awarded to the winners.

Sewing contests have been sponsored by the Arkansas City Flour Mills Company for articles made from Gingham Girl flour bags. In Oklahoma the Gingham Girl Sewing Contests open to home economics students have recently been sponsored by local merchants who made the contest rules or regulations for their particular locality. The Arkansas City Flour Mill Company in answer to a letter of inquiry stated that these contests did not as a rule create much interest and that this was particularly true in the larger towns.



The Scholastic, a magazine of special interest to teachers, has announced several commercial contests, among which were the Block Print and the Textile Decoration Competitions which could be used in home making classes.

The Block Print Contest conducted by the C. Howard Hunt Pen Company of Camden, New Jersey was a national contest open to all high school students. Awards were given for the best print made from linoleum blocks using water soluble ink. Only the proof was submitted in the competition. The entire process from the original drawing to the final proof was to be the work of one student. Prints in black and white or in colors were acceptable as entries. National prizes of \$30.00; \$25.00; and \$15.00 respectively, and five additional awards of \$2.50 each were given by the sponsors for the best prints submitted. An additional award of \$10.00 was offered for the best print in colors. The sponsors stated in answer to a letter that approximately 1,000 different schools entered the competition in the spring of 1937.

In the Textile Decoration Contest directed by the American Crayon Company prizes were awarded to high school students who submitted the best designs applied to textiles. Any design painted, stenciled, stamped, dyed, appliqued, batiked, or embroidered on textiles or woven into a fabric was acceptable as an entry. All entries were submitted to the sponsors and entered in the national competition. The sponsors set the closing date of the contest and appointed judges who selected the best designs. National prizes consisting of \$25.00 first prize, \$15.00 second prize, \$10.00 third prize, and ten awards of \$2.50 were given for the best designs submitted.

In 1936 the Women's National Exposition of Arts and Industries announced the Women's National Championship Cookery Competition open to any woman or girl over 16 years old. The first part of the competition consisted of menu and recipe planning. Each contestant was to submit a menu for a four course dinner including six recipes which required the use of canned food. The writer of one entry was selected from each of the six sections of the United States to compete in the National Cooking Championship held in New York City. The six winners were to prepare their individual dinners using the recipes submitted in a public competition. The prepared dinners were judged on: balance, palatability, appearance, ingenuity, and originality. The national prizes awarded were: first award \$500.00, second award \$250.00, third award \$200.00, fourth award \$150.00, fifth and sixth award \$100.00 each.

Other commercial contests which teachers have reported using in home making classes were the National Cheese Institute Contest, the Kraft Cheese Menu Contest, the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest, a Local Newspaper Menu Contest, and the Star Home Maker Competition.<sup>3</sup> Letters of inquiry to the manufactures of Kraft Cheese and of Swans Down Cake flour failed to obtain any information concerning contests sponsored by these concerns, and according to the statement of a teacher, the Local Newspaper Menu Contest has been discontinued.<sup>4</sup> However, information was obtained regarding the National Cheese Institute Contest and the Star Home Maker Competition.

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3. Table II, p. 19.

4. Table X, p. 37.

During the fall of 1937 the National Cheese Institute conducted a High School Chef's Contest open to boys and girls of high school age. Those who competed were to plan seven complete dinner menus featuring cheese as a main dish. Contestants were to submit the complete dinner menus with the recipes for the cheese dishes. Entries were judged on the basis of the nutritional balance of the menus, the ingenuity shown in building complete menus around a cheese dish, and the excellence and novelty of the cheese dish recipe. One hundred and sixty cash awards were offered. Both boys and girls competed for the Grand Chef's prize of \$200.00. However, in cases of all other prizes boys competed with boys, and girls with girls. The awards offered for the boys and for the girls were identical. These awards were: first prize \$100.00, second prize \$50.00, third prize \$25.00, fourth prize \$10.00, thirty-five prizes of \$5.00 each, and forty-five prizes of \$2.00 each.

In 1935 a letter from the State Department of Education to home economics teachers announced that the weekly Kansas City Star offered an award of \$100.00 to a Star Home Maker in Oklahoma. Similar awards were offered to Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri. In order to be eligible for the award, each state was required to have a minimum of five and a maximum of ten representatives in the state contest at the American Royal Live Stock Show in Kansas City. This competition was open to girls from farm homes who had completed two years of home economics work and were enrolled in vocational high schools. Each school which desired to enter a competitor selected their candidate

through a local committee or judges appointed by the school superintendent. Each school selecting a home maker was to submit to the state judges the girl's record which included a photograph of the winner, a report of the projects completed and a story of her home life and activities. The representatives from each state attend the American Royal Live Stock Show in Kansas City and judges appointed by the Kansas City Star select a Star Home Maker from each state entered in the competition. The contestants were scored on the following points: (1) achievement in the home, (2) worthy home membership, (3) personal development, (4) school activities, and (5) leadership.



## INTERPRETATION OF DATA

## Teachers' Questionnaire

Seventy-seven home economics teachers replied to the questionnaire on the use of commercial contests. Although a report of this study represents only 27 per cent of the total questionnaires sent to teachers it does include returns from 72 towns and cities.

The results of the investigation show that 58.4 per cent of the teachers replying, or 15.7 per cent of the teachers contacted had used commercial contests in their home making classes. A tabulation of the responses indicate that commercial contests are widely used by the teachers reporting.

Table I

## Number of Teachers Responding

Responses	: :	Number Reporting	: :	Per cent Reporting	: :	Per cent of Teachers Contacted
Teachers Using contests	:	45	:	58.4	:	15.7
Teachers not using contests	:	32	:	41.5	:	11.2

## USES OF CONTESTS

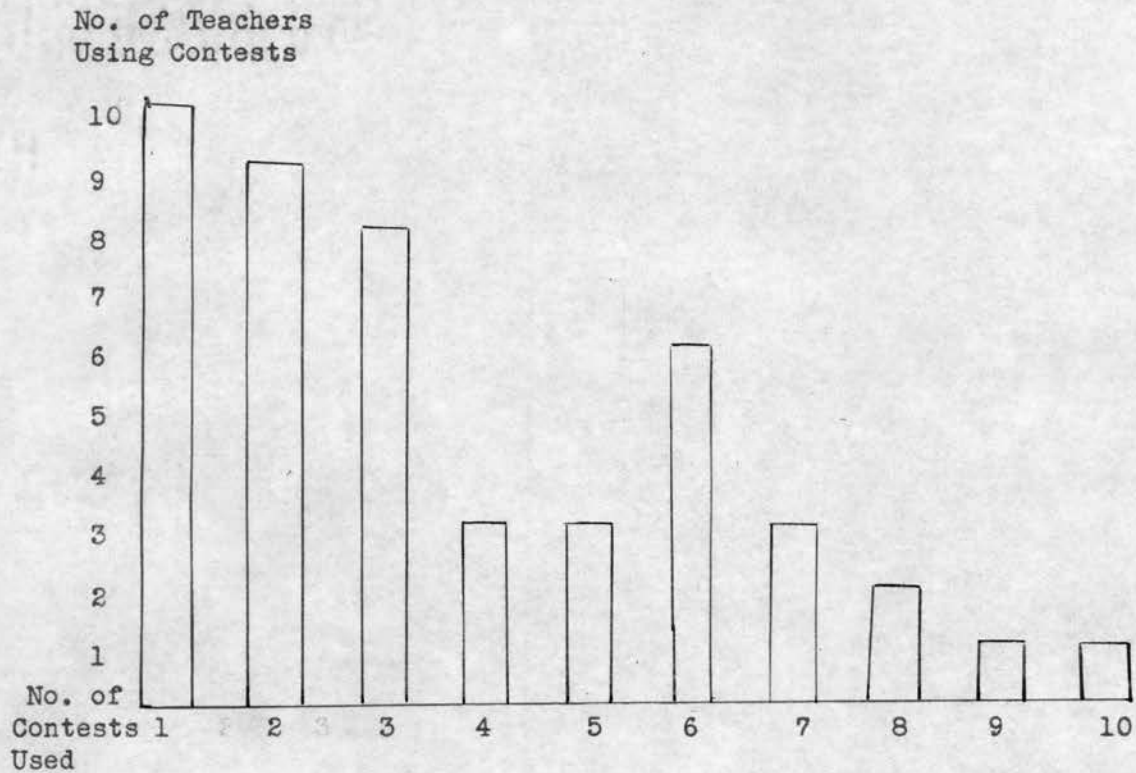
In Part I of the teachers questionnaire, a survey was made to determine the commercial contests used and how teachers were using them.

There are several commercial contests which are now being sponsored or have recently been sponsored for home making classes. This study included the eighteen contests listed on the questionnaire and five others which teachers have added. Although some teachers considered the 4-H Club Contests, the interscholastic contests, and contests at fairs as commercial, it was felt that since they were not used to advertise products or to promote sales, they should not be included in this study.

It was found that teachers were familiar with 23 different contests and that they had used 19. Some of the teachers reported the use of only one contest, but most of the teachers had used several contests. The range in the number of contests used by the teachers reporting varied from 1 to 10. Figure 1 shows the relation of the number of contests used to the number of teachers reporting.

Figure 1

The Relation of the Contests Used  
to the Number of Teachers Reporting



There is little uniformity as to the number of contests used by each teacher. It is interesting to observe that while 19 teachers had used only 1 or 2 contests, 13 teachers had used 6 or more contests. There was no difference in the number of teachers using 4 contests and those using 5 contests.

While figure 1 represents the relation of the total contests used to the number of teachers reporting, Table II shows the number of teachers who were familiar with each of the 23 contests listed, the number of teachers using each contests, and the number who had received contest awards and not used them.

Table II

## Teachers Using Contests in Home Making Classes

Commercial Contests	: Teachers : : Familiar : : with : : Contests :	: Teachers : : Using : : Contests :	: Teachers Receiv- : ing and not : Using Contest : Awards
1. Simplicity Sewing	: 26	: 15	: 4
2. Rumford Home Baking	: 21	: 12	: 4
3. McCall Sewing	: 21	: 10	: 1
4. Meat Story	: 16	: 9	: 2
5. Certificate of Award	: 11	: 8	: 3
6. Du Barry Sewing	: 19	: 7	: 5
7. Dytint Home Dyeing	: 20	: 7	: 2
8. Home Maker Student Essay	: 11	: 7	: 3
9. Simplicity Doll Dress Making	: 20	: 6	: 2
10. Meat Poster	: 16	: 5	: 3
11. Crane Kitchen Planning	: 16	: 5	: 1
12. Personality	: 18	: 4	: 2
13. Advance Sewing	: 15	: 4	: 2
14. Menu and Recipe	: 5	: 3	: 2
15. Standard H.M.Product Note Book	: 6	: 3	: 2
16. Block Print	: 3	: 3	: 2
17. Textile Decoration	: 2	: 3	: 2
18. Gingham Girl Sewing	: 2	: 3	: 2
19. Nat'l Cheese Institute Menu	: 3	: 3	: 2
20. Star Home Maker	: 2	: 2	: 2
21. Kraft Cheese Menu	: 1	: 1	: 2
22. Swans Down Cake Flour	: 1	: 1	: 2
23. Local Newspaper Menu	: 1	: 1	: 2



The number of teachers familiar with the contests studied ranged from 1 to 26. Thirteen of the 23 contests were known to 11 or more teachers, while 3 contests were known to only one teacher. The best known contests in the order indicated by the teachers were: The Simplicity Sewing Contest, Rumford Home Baking Contest, McCall Sewing Contest, Dytint Home Dyeing Contest, and Simplicity Doll Dress Making Contest. The least known contests were: The Kraft Cheese Menu Contest, the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest, and the Local Newspaper Menu Competition.

Although the range in the number of teachers using the individual contests is not so great as those familiar with contests, the number varies from 1 to 15. The contests most frequently used were the Simplicity Sewing Contest, the Rumford Home Baking Contest, the McCall Sewing Contest, and the Meat Story Competition. The Standard H.M. Product Notebook Contest, the Block Print Contest, the Textile Decoration Contest, and the Gingham Girl Sewing Contest were known to very few teachers and not used by any.

Some teachers receive the contests awards but do not conduct the contests. According to the results 5 teachers had received but not used the awards for the Dytint Contest, 7 teachers reported using the contest, while 21 indicated that they were familiar with it. Four teachers had not used the awards received for the Simplicity Sewing Contest; 15 had used the contest, and 26 were familiar with it. Four teachers had also received but not used the McCall Sewing Contest Awards; 10 teachers had used the contest, and 21 were familiar with it.

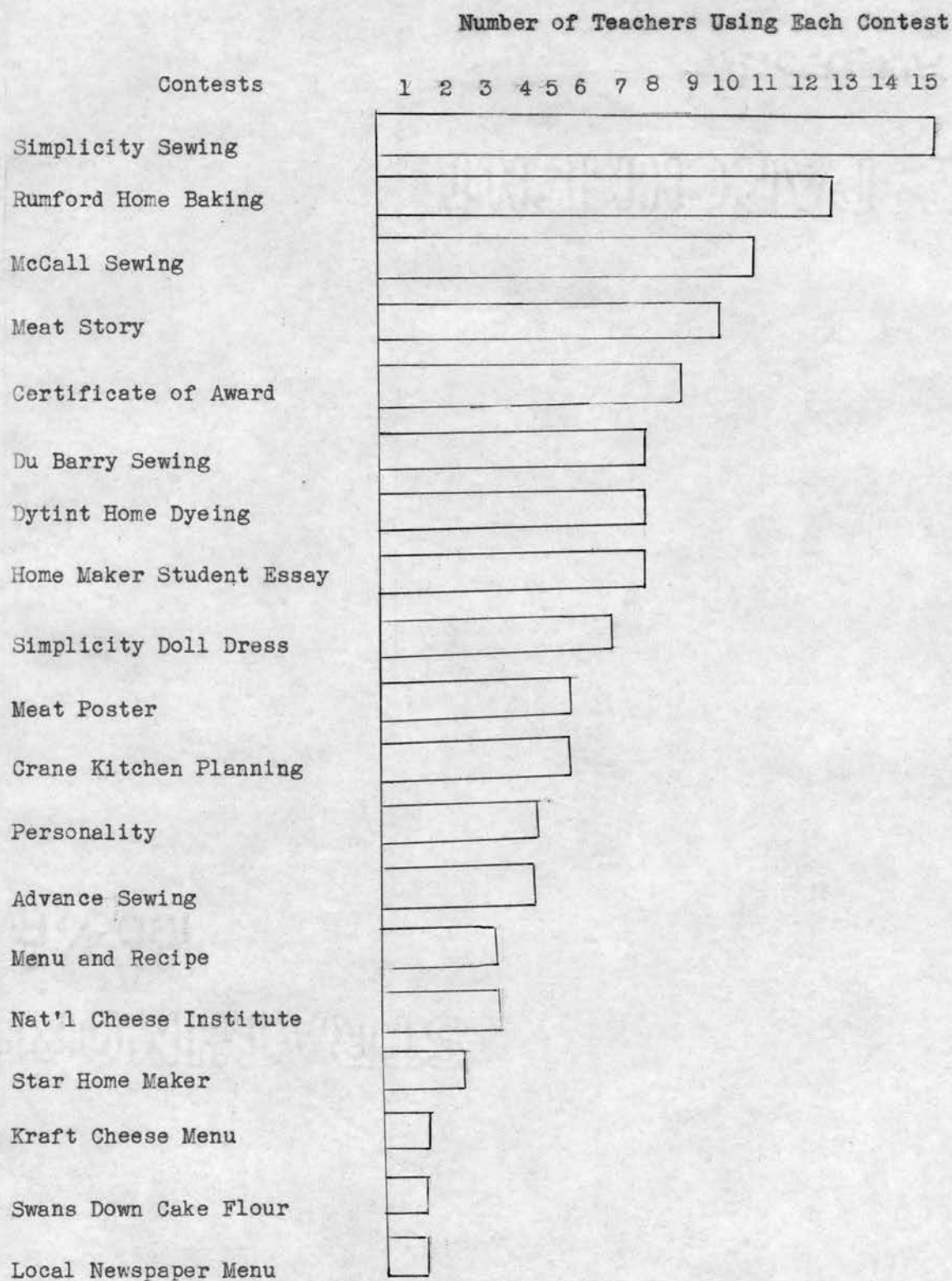
That more teachers are interested in contests or contest materials than actually use them is evident from the fact that more teachers are familiar with contests than use them, and that teachers received awards for several contests which they did not use. Other evidence of interest in contests is shown by the comments of teachers. One teacher wrote, "I have not used commercial contests, but plan to use one or two this year, the Dytint Contest and the National Meat Board Contest."

Another teacher said, "One year I tried to get my students interested in 'How my Home Economics has helped me at Home.' One girl entered but it was of no particular value for after she found out that she was the only one she did not complete her entry."

Figure 2 shows the number of teachers using each of the different contests.

Nineteen different contests were used by the teachers reporting. Fifteen teachers used the Simplicity Sewing Contest, 12 the Rumford Home Baking, and 10 used the McCall Sewing Contest. Seven teachers reported using the Du Barry Sewing Contest, 7 the Dytint Home Dyeing Contest, and 7 the Home Maker Student Essay Contest. The fewest number of teachers used the Kraft Cheese Menu Contest, the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest, and the Local Newspaper Menu Contest.

Figure 2





Some companies send contest materials to home economics teachers without being solicited while other commercial concerns send the material only upon request. Most of the material received is used for contest purposes, but much of it is used in other ways. The data in Table III shows how teachers have used contest materials.

The results in Table III indicate that 7 teachers used the Simplicity Sewing Contest exactly as directed, 2 changed it to fit the local situation, while 3 distributed the products without conducting the contests. Only 7 teachers used the Certificate of Award material exactly as directed, while 1 used the material to get ideas for other contests, and another distributed the products but did not hold the contest. In the Rumford Home Baking Contest, 6 teachers used the material exactly as directed, and 6 changed it to fit the local situation, while half as many teachers used the products for comparison as distributed the products without holding the contest, and only one teacher used the material to get ideas for other contests. Eighteen teachers had used the material for the Home Dyeing Contest, and 10 of this number had distributed the products without conducting the contests.

Table III

## Ways of Using Contests Material

Contest	: Exactly as : Directed	: To Get Ideas : for Other : Contests	: For : Comparison : With Other : Products	: Changed : to Fit the : Local : Situation	: Distributed : Products. : No Contest : Held
Advance Sewing	:	:	:	:	:
Du Barry Sewing	:	:	:	:	:
McCall's Sewing	3	:	2	4	2
Gingham Girl Sewing	6	:	:	4	3
Simplicity Sewing	:	:	:	2	:
Simplicity Doll Dress Making	7	:	2	5	3
Personality	2	:	:	3	4
Standard H.M. Product Note Book	2	1	1	2	1
Certificate of Award	7	:	:	:	:
Home Maker Student Essay	3	1	:	:	1
Dytint, Home Dyeing	2	1	:	:	:
Rumford, Home Baking	6	1	3	3	10
Crane Kitchen Planning	2	1	1	6	6
Essay on Meat	4	:	1	2	4
Poster on Meat	4	:	:	2	4
Menu and Recipe	2	:	:	3	3
Others	:	:	:	:	:
Nat'l Cheese Institute, Menu	2	:	:	1	:
Kraft Cheese Menu Planning	1	:	:	:	:
Swans Down Cake Flour	1	:	1	:	:
Local Newspaper Menu	1	:	:	:	:
Star Home Maker	1	:	:	:	:

The extent to which home making classes participate in contests is largely controlled by the teachers, since they decide whether certain selected girls shall enter contests, whether participation shall be required as a class project, whether all students shall be encouraged to participate, or whether only those who wish shall participate. Table IV shows the extent of class participation as reported by the teachers.

The same number of teachers required participation in the Simplicity Sewing Contest as in the Du Barry Sewing Contest, and in the McCall Sewing Contest, yet twice as many teachers encouraged participation in the Simplicity Contests as in either of the other contests.

The Personality Contest and the Rumford Home Baking Contest were required as class projects by 4 teachers; 6 teachers encouraged students to participate in the Home Baking Contest, while 1 teacher selected certain girls to enter this contest.

In the Home Makers Student Essay Contest and in the Crane Kitchen Planning Contest, the same number of teachers required participation as encouraged participation, and only one teacher selected girls to enter the Home Maker Student Essay Contest.

Four teachers encouraged all students to enter the Meat Story Competition; 3 teachers required participation as a class project; 2 teachers selected certain girls to participate, and one teacher let only those who wished participate.



Table IV

## Participation in Contests Reported by Teachers

Commercial Contest Used	: Certain : Selected : Girls	: Required : As Class : Project	: All Encouraged : But Not : Required	: Only Those : Who Wished
1. Simplicity Sewing	:	5	6	:
2. McCall Sewing	:	5	3	:
3. Du Barry Sewing	:	5	3	:
4. Rumford Home Baking	1	4	6	:
5. Personality	:	4	:	:
6. Student Home Maker Essay	1	3	3	:
7. Crane Kitchen Planning	1	3	3	:
8. Meat Essay	2	3	4	1
9. Dytint Home Dyeing	1	2	3	:
10. Advance Sewing	:	2	3	:
11. Simplicity Doll Dress Making	:	2	2	:
12. Certificate of Award	:	1	6	:
13. Meat Poster	1	1	4	:
14. Menu and Recipe	:	:	2	1
15. Gingham Girl Sewing	:	:	:	:
16. Standard H.M. Product Note Book	:	:	:	:
17. Textile Decoration	:	:	:	:
18. Block Print	:	:	:	:
Others	:	:	:	:
19. Nat'l Cheese Institute Menu	:	2	1	:
20. Kraft Cheese Menu	:	1	:	:
21. Swans Down Cake Flour	:	1	:	:
22. Local Newspaper Menu	:	:	1	:
23. Star Home Maker	2	:	:	:



The extent of competition offered by commercial contests varies greatly. There are local contests, state wide contests, contests limited to a group of states, and nation wide contests. A grouping of the contests used in this study according to the extent of competition provided by the sponsors shows that the Advance Sewing Contest, the Du Barry Sewing Contest, the McCall Sewing Contest, the Gingham Girl Sewing Contest, the Simplicity Sewing and the Doll Dress Contests, the Personality Contest, the Standard H. M. Product Note Book Contest, the Home Dyeing Contest, the Home Baking Contest, the Kitchen Planning Contest, the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest, and the Newspaper Menu Contest were local. The Star Home Maker Contest was both local and state wide. The Home Maker Student Essay Contest was both local and national. The Kraft Cheese Contest was state wide and nation wide, while the Menu and Recipe Contest was among groups of states and nation wide. The Meat Story Contest, the Meat Poster Contest, the Textile Decoration, the Block Print, and the National Cheese Institute Contest were nation wide.

According to the reports of the teachers, 17 of the contests were used locally, 5 in state wide competitions and 8 in nation wide competitions. Four teachers used the Home Maker Student Essay Contest locally but only 3 teachers used the national competition. Although 2 teachers used the Star Home Maker Contest locally, only one had students enter the state wide competition. Four teachers used the Meat Story Contest for national competition, 3 used the Meat Poster Contest, 2 used the Menu and Recipe Contest, and 2 the National Cheese

Institute Contest, while only one teacher used the Kraft Cheese Contest for national competition.

A comparison of the extent of competition in the contests reported by teachers with the extent of competition provided by the sponsors shows several inconsistencies. These discrepancies suggest that some of the teachers reporting them had not considered the entries good enough to be entered in national competitions, while other teachers had not made a careful study of the contest materials, or that the rules governing the extent of the competitions had changed. According to the reports, 6 teachers had used the Meat Story Contest for local competition, 4 had used the Meat Poster Contest locally, and one teacher had used the National Cheese Institute Contest for local competition, when no local competitions were provided by the sponsors. Again teachers reported the use of the Home Dyeing Contest and the National Cheese Institute Contest in state wide competitions which were not offered by the sponsors. Other inconsistencies reported by the teachers were the use of the Certificate of Award Contest and the Simplicity Sewing Contest in nation wide competition when only local competition was provided by the sponsors. However, during the fall of 1937 the Simplicity Pattern Company did sponsor a Note Book Contest which was national, but there was no indication that this was the contest used.

In all the contests reported except one, the awards were given by the company sponsoring them. Local merchants provided the awards for the Local Newspaper Menu Contest. Sometimes additional or duplicate awards are offered to the contest winners by the teacher, by local

merchants, or by companies other than the sponsors. Local merchants gave additional awards for the Advance Sewing Contest, the McCall Sewing Contest, and for the Student Home Maker Essay Competition. Other companies gave additional awards for the Simplicity Sewing Contest, the Student Home Maker Essay Contest and the Star Home Maker Contest. Winners also received additional awards from teachers for the Advance Sewing Contest and the Simplicity Sewing Contest.

The majority of the companies sponsoring commercial contests request that some publicity such as exhibits, displays, and newspaper accounts be given to the contests conducted. Table V shows the extent and type of publicity provided by the teachers.



Table V

## Publicity Given Contests

Commercial Contests Used	No. of Teachers: Using Contest	Exhibit or Display		Newspaper Accounts		Public Invited To See Contest
		At School	By Local Merchant	Announce- ments of Contests	Results of Contests	
Simplicity Sewing	15	11	2	6	4	1
Rumford Home Baking	12	5	2	2	2	1
McCall Sewing	10	7		2	1	1
Meat Story	9		1	2	2	1
Certificate of Award	8	3		3	1	
Du Barry Sewing	7	5	1	5	4	2
Dytint Home Dyeing	7					
Home Maker Student Essay	7	3				
Simplicity Doll Dress Making	6	4	2	2	2	
Meat Poster	5	1		3	2	2
Crane Kitchen Planning	5	2		1	1	
Personality	4	3		1		
Advance Sewing	4	3	1	1	1	2
Menu and Recipe	3	1				
Standard H.M. Product Note Book						
Block Print						
Textile Decoration						
Gingham Girl Sewing						
Others						
Nat'l Cheese Institute	3			2		
Star Home Maker	2	1	1			
Kraft Cheese Menu	1	1				1
Swans Down Cake Flour	1	1				
Local Newspaper Menu	1	1		1	1	

It is evident from the table that more exhibits and displays were held at school than by the local merchants, and that more newspaper publicity was given to the announcements of contests than to the results of the contests. In the Simplicity Sewing Contest 11 teachers held exhibits at schools while only 2 had the entries displayed by local merchants. Six teachers provided publicity through newspaper announcements of the contest, and 4 through the announcements of contest results. Seven teachers held exhibits or displays at schools for the McCall Sewing Contest, and while 2 teachers announced the contests through newspapers only one teacher announced the results. The public was invited to comparatively few of the contests. One teacher stated that publicity was given by presenting the Certificate of Award to the winner at the commencement exercise.

Another request made by several of the companies which sponsor local contests is that reports of the contest be sent to them. Some of the companies ask for the number of contestants enrolled, the names and photographs of the winners and often for newspaper accounts of the contest. Approximately one-fourth of the teachers using commercial contests sent reports to the sponsors.

Teachers were asked to indicate the approximate number of students participating in each contest and the number enrolled in the classes. Only twenty-six teachers reported the number of students participating and the number enrolled in home making classes. (Table VI)

Table VI

## Teachers' Reports of Students Entering Contests

Commercial Contest	: No. of : Teachers : Reporting :	: No. of : Students : Entering : Contests :	: No. of : Students : In Classes :
1. Advance Sewing	: 3	: 115	: 130
2. Du Barry Sewing	: 7	: 164	: 200
3. McCall's Sewing	: 8	: 179	: 260
4. Gingham Girl Sewing	: :	: :	: :
5. Simplicity Sewing	: 11	: 292	: 356
6. Simplicity Doll Dress Making	: 4	: 92	: 127
7. Personality	: 4	: 105	: 115
8. Standard H.M. Product Note Book:	: :	: :	: :
9. Certificate of Award	: 5	: 366	: 397
10. Home Maker Student Essay	: 6	: 246	: 287
11. Dytint, Home Dyeing	: 2	: 75	: 75
12. Rumford Home Baking	: 7	: 228	: 363
13. Crane Kitchen Planning	: 2	: 120	: 140
14. Meat Story	: 8	: 231	: 453
15. Meat Poster	: 5	: 191	: 407
16. Textile Decoration	: :	: :	: :
17. Block Print	: :	: :	: :
18. Menu and Recipe	: 3	: 87	: 100
19. Nat'l Cheese Institute Menu	: 2	: 73	: 73
20. Kraft Cheese Menu	: 1	: 25	: 75
21. Swans Down Cake Flour	: 1	: 60	: 60
22. Local Newspaper Menu	: 1	: 20	: 100
23. Star Home Maker	: 2	: 3	: 135
	: :	: :	: :

According to teachers reports, the most students entered the Certificate of Award Competition. Although 5 more teachers reported the enrollment in the Simplicity Sewing Contest than in the Home Maker Student Essay Contest, the difference in the number of students entering each contest was only 36. Eight teachers gave the enrollment in the Meat Story Contest, and 8 in the McCall Sewing Contest, yet 231 students entered the Meat Story Contest while only 179 entered the McCall Sewing Contest. The table shows that all the students in the

classes entered the Dytint Home Dyeing Contest, the National Cheese Institute Menu Contest and the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest.

Not all teachers who sent replies responded to the question regarding the number of years that they had used each contest. Table VII shows the number of teachers reporting the number of years they used each different contest.

Table VII

Teachers Reporting Number of Years Contests were Used

Commercial Contest Used	Number of Teachers Reporting Use				
	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5 yrs.
Simplicity Sewing	4	5	3		
Rumford Home Baking	2	4	2		
McCalls Sewing	1	1	4	1	1
Meat Story	2	1	3		1
Certificate of Award	3	2		1	1
Du Barry Sewing	2	1	3		
Home Maker Student Essay	3	2	1		
Simplicity Doll Dress	5	1	1		
Meat Poster	4	1			
Crane Kitchen Planning	2	1	3		
Personality	2		2		
Advance Sewing	1		3		
Menu and Recipe		1	1		
Others					
Nat'l Cheese Institute	2				
Kraft Cheese	1				
Local Newspaper Menu			1		

Five teachers reported using the Simplicity Sewing Contest for two years, 3 teachers had used it for three years, and 4 had used it one year. Four teachers had used the McCalls Sewing Contest two years, while 2 teachers had used it for one year, and 2 for three years. One



teacher had used the McCall Sewing Contest and one the Certificate of Award Contest for four years. Teachers also reported using these contests for five years, and the Meat Story Contest and the Rumford Home Baking Contest for five years.

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### Factors Influencing the Use of Contests

Part II of the questionnaire sent to teachers deals with the factors influencing the use of commercial contests. A study was made to determine the reasons for using commercial contests, reasons for discontinuing any contests used, and reasons for never using contests.

Although commercial contests are recognized as a means of advertising, it is interesting to observe the way in which the sponsors of the contests seek to arouse the interest of teachers and pupils. Some commercial concerns which offer cash awards emphasize the amount of money given as prizes. Typical announcements of such contests are: "\$1,300.00 in cash prizes." "Win \$200.00 or one of the other 168 cash awards." "\$1,000.00 in prizes" and "This offers a real opportunity to win one of the valuable prizes."

Several companies offer contests as a means of creating interest. They state that the contests offer an opportunity "to stimulate new interest and enthusiasm", "for inspiration and good results", to invite and sustain interest", and "for appealing and practical instruction." The purpose of one contest according to the sponsor was to "improve home practice."

The teachers' reasons for using commercial contests may or may not be for one of the purposes stated by the manufactures. The data in Table VIII shows that the teachers' reasons for using commercial contests were to stimulate interest, to improve the quality of work, to interest patrons, to advertise the school, to encourage home practice, to set up standards, and to satisfy local custom or demand.

The following table shows how many teachers checked each of the reasons for use listed on the questionnaire.

Table VIII

## Reasons for Using Commercial Contests

Reason for Using Contest	Sewing - Advance	Sewing - Du Barry	Sewing - McCall	Sewing - Simplicity	Doll Dress - Simplicity	Personality	Certificate of Award	Home Maker Student Essay	Dyeing - Dytint	Baking - Rumford	Kitchen Planning - Crane	Essay on Meat	Poster on Meat	Menu and Recipe	Nat'l Cheese Institute	Kraft Cheese - Menu	Local Newspaper Menu	Swans Down Cake Flour	Star Home Maker
1. To stimulate interest	4	7	6	11	6	3	4	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
2. To improve the quality of work	3	5	4	11	4	2	3	1	2	2		2	3	1					
3. To interest patrons	4	6	4	7	1	3	3		2		1	2	3				1	1	
4. To advertise school	2		1	2	1		2	1	1			1					1	1	
5. To encourage home practice	1	1	1	1		1	1	2	1	2									
6. To satisfy local custom or demand			1					1								1			
7. To set standards		1		2	1				2						1				
8. Requested by Educational Officials																			
9. To raise money																			

Eleven teachers used the Simplicity Sewing Contest, one of the most popular contests, to stimulate interest. Seven used it to interest patrons, 11 to improve the quality of work, while 2 used the contest to advertise the school and 2 to set up standards. The Du Barry Sewing Contest was used by 7 teachers to create interest, by 5 to improve the quality of work, and by 6 to interest patrons. Four teachers used the



McCall Sewing Contest to interest patrons and 4 to improve the quality of work, while 6 teachers used the contest to stimulate interest. Only one teacher used the Home Maker Student Essay Contest to advertise the school, and one used it to satisfy local custom or demand. None of the contests were used to raise money or to meet the request of educational officials.

Only twelve or slightly more than one-fourth of the teachers who had used commercial contests (Table II) reported the discontinuance of any contests. The data used in Table IX and X is based on the information obtained from the reports of twelve teachers. Table IX shows the number of teachers discontinuing each of the contests listed.

Table IX

## Commercial Contests Discontinued by Teachers

Contest Discontinued	No. of Teachers Reporting
McCalls Sewing	2
Simplicity Sewing	1
Simplicity Doll Dress Making	4
Certificate of Award	1
Home Maker Student Essay	2
Rumford Home Baking	5
Meat Story	4
Meat Poster	4
Kraft Cheese Menu	1
Local Newspaper Menu	1
Star Home Maker	1

Five teachers reported having discontinued the Rumford Home Baking Contest, while 4 teachers discontinued the Simplicity Doll Dress Making Contest, 4 the Meat Story Contest, and 4 the Meat Poster Contest. Two



A comparison of the results in Table IX with Table X shows that 4 of the 5 teachers who had discontinued the Rumford Home Baking Contest did so because too few students participated, and 2 teachers discontinued the McCall Sewing Contest for the same reason. Two teachers discontinued the Simplicity Doll Dress Contest and 2 the Home Maker Student Essay Contest because they did not consider them worth the teachers time or the pupils time and effort. One teacher discontinued the Rumford Home Baking contest and one the Star Home Maker Contest because they caused antagonism among students. One teacher stopped using the Simplicity Doll Dress Contest and another no longer used the Rumford Home Baking Contest because the contestants were unfair. One teacher explained that students were not always interested in contests, while another stated that all pupils did not want to use the same brand of pattern.

Thirty-two or 40.1 per cent of the 77 teachers responding had never used commercial contests. Although no questionnaires were returned without being answered or without some comment, 11 teachers gave no reason for never using commercial contests, 8 stated that since it was their first year of teaching they had had no experience with contests, while 4 teachers had not used contests because they were not familiar with them. Three teachers opposed contests, while the same number of teachers had not used contests because they were not popular and were received too late in the school year to fit into the program. One teacher had not used contests because the superintendent opposed them. Another teacher stated that she was too



busy with interscholastic contests and banquets to use commercial contests. Other comments from teachers indicate that although they have never used commercial contests they are interested in them.

Some of the comments received were:

"I have never considered commercial contests to any extent. I have tried two or three and gotten no appreciable response, so I have disregarded all others."

"I have suggested a few contests to classes in the past years with the understanding that all contest work would be individual but girls never became interested enough to enter any."

"I have not used contests but plan to use one or two this year."

"I have been wondering if commercial contests were worth while."



### Students' Questionnaire

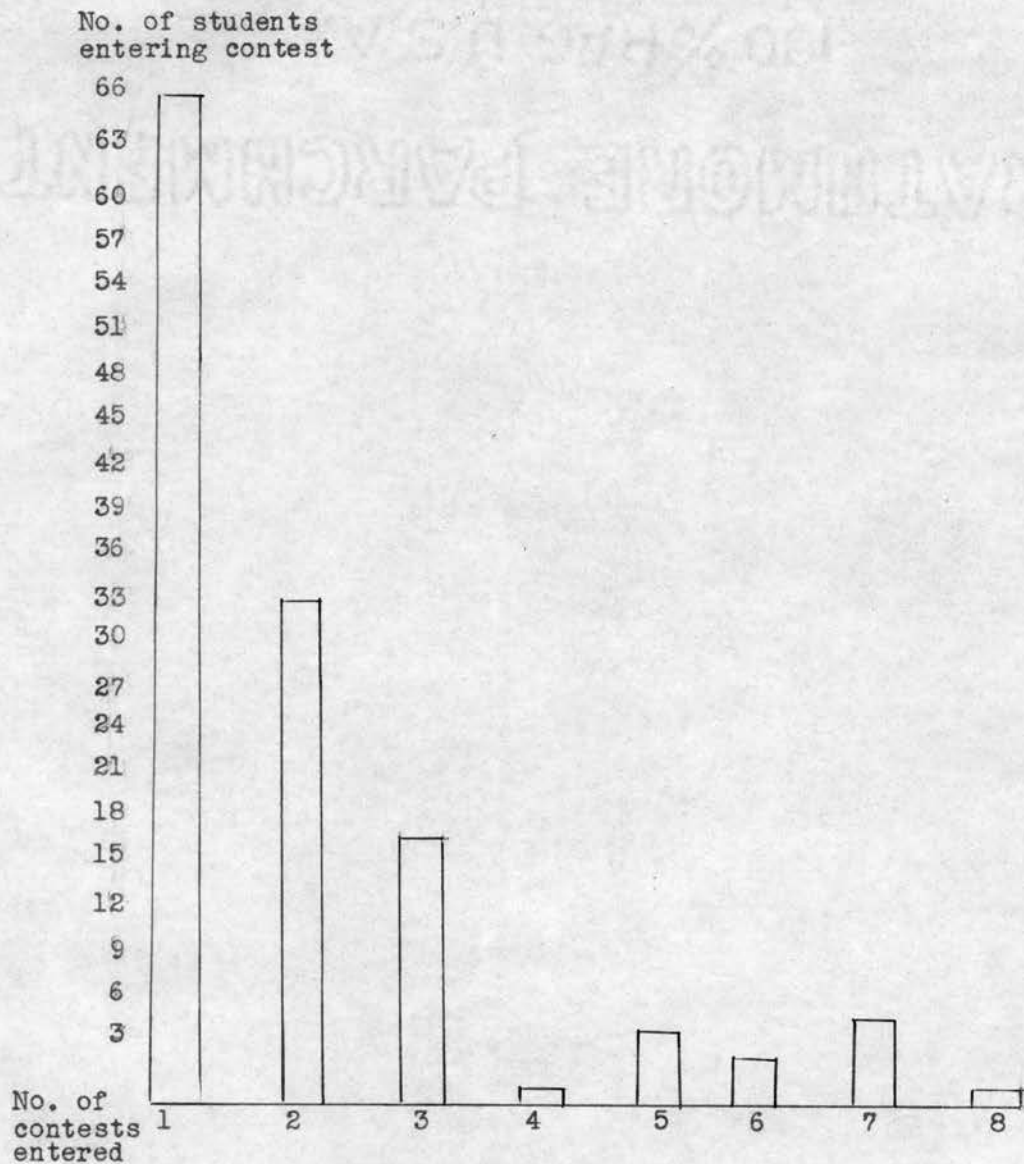
The use of commercial contests in home making classes affects the students who participate in them as well as the teachers who conduct them. In order to learn the students reactions toward the use of commercial contests, each teacher contacted was asked to secure the desired information from five students. Since the students questionnaires were distributed by the teachers, the actual number of students contacted cannot be determined. However, the results show that 135 students from 30 different localities answered the questionnaires.

While 45 teachers reported the use of commercial contests in home making classes, only 30 (66.6%) of this number secured the information desired from students. Two reasons were given for not obtaining this information. First, the teacher no longer taught in the schools where the contests had been conducted, and second, the students who had participated in contests no longer received instruction from the teacher contacted.

The 135 students who answered the questionnaires reported participation in 250 commercial contests. Most of the students had entered only one contest, yet several students had entered as many as seven or eight contests. Figure 3 shows the relation of the number of contests entered to the number of students reporting.

Figure 3

The Relation of the Number of Contests Entered  
to the Number of Students Reporting



Sixty-six, which is 48.8 per cent of the students, had entered only one contest; 32 (23.7%) had participated in two contests, and 16 (13.3%) had taken part in three contests. Only 19 students had entered more than three contests, yet 8 of these students had entered seven or more contests.

Teachers reported using 19 different contests, while students reported using 22. Although teachers indicated that they had used the Star Home Maker Contest and the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest, none of the students indicated participation in these contests. The data in Table XI is based upon the responses of the 135 students and shows the contests entered according to the students reports. It will be observed that students participated in the Textile Decoration Contest, the Campfire Girls Cake Baking Contest, the McCall Doll Dress Making Contest, the Camay Soap Contest, and the Oxydal Contest which teachers did not report using. (Table II) Seven students considered the 4-H Club Contest commercial. These were omitted from Table XI since they were not used for the purpose of advertising products or promoting sales. Five students indicated participation in "other" but did not name the contest. Due to lack of information these were also omitted from the tabulations made.

Table XI  
Participation in Contests Reported by Students

Commercial Contests	No. of Students Entering	Per cent of Students Replying
1. Simplicity Sewing	62	45.9
2. Rumford Home Baking	30	22.2
3. McCall's Sewing	26	19.2
4. Du Barry Sewing	22	16.9
5. Home Maker Student Essay	20	14.8
6. Advance Sewing	17	13.0
7. Meat Story	16	11.8
8. Personality	12	8.4
9. Crane Kitchen Planning	7	5.4
10. Simplicity Doll Dress	6	4.6
11. Meat Poster	5	3.9
12. Dytint, Home Dyeing	4	3.0
13. Certificate of Award	4	3.0
14. Menu and Recipe	3	2.3
15. Textile Decoration	1	.7
16. Gingham Girl Sewing		
17. Standard H.M. Product Note Book		
18. Block Print		
Others		
19. Nat'l Cheese Institute Menu	6	4.4
20. Campfire Girls Cake Baking	2	1.7
21. Kraft Cheese Menu	2	1.7
22. Local Newspaper Menu	2	1.7
23. McCall Doll Dress Making	1	.7
24. Camay Soap	1	.7
25. Oxydal	1	.7



There is a definite relation between the number of contests used by teachers in Table II and the number of students reporting participation in contests as given in Table XI. A comparison of the results in the tables show that the Simplicity Sewing Contest, the Rumford Home Baking Contest, and the McCall Sewing Contests were the contests most often used by teachers and also most often participated in by students. More than twice as many students entered the Simplicity Sewing Contest as entered any other contest named. This was also the contest most often used by teachers. Thirty students entered the Rumford Home Baking Contest and almost as many entered the McCall Sewing Contest. There was very little difference in the number of students reporting participation in the Du Barry Sewing Contest and in the Home Maker Student Essay Contest. The fewest number of students entered the Textile Decoration Contest, the Campfire Girls Baking Contest, the McCalls Doll Dress Making Contest, the Camay Soap Contest, and the Oxydal Contest. Four of the 6 contests in which the greatest number of students reported participation were sewing contests. Sewing Contests appear to be the most popular type of contest among students as well as teachers.

Students were asked to give their reason for entering contests. Table XII shows the number of students who check each of the reasons listed.

Table XII  
Reasons for Entering Contests

Reason	No. of Students Reporting	Per cent of Students Reporting
Made the work more interesting	88	65.1
Provided a goal to work toward	83	62.9
Wanted to learn something new	75	59.2
To win an award	52	48.5
Personal satisfaction gained	37	27.4
To bring honor to the school	25	18.5
Was required to enter	24	17.8
Received higher grade for entering	18	13.3
Because classmates did	17	12.2
Felt I could win easily	10	7.4
To show others I could win	9	6.6
Was selected	7	5.1
Needed the award	7	5.1

A comparison of the results in Table VIII with those of Table XII points out the fact that most teachers use commercial contests to stimulate interest, and most students enter contests because they make the work more interesting. Eighty-three students entered contests in order to have a goal to work toward, while 75 students entered to learn something new. Fifty-two students entered to win an award, while 25 entered to bring honor to the school. Eighteen students entered contests to receive a higher grade, while half this number wanted to show others they could win. Twenty-four students entered contests because they were required to do so, and 7 students were selected to enter.

According to the students' point of view, commercial contests have proven to be very beneficial. The fact that 75 of the 135 students



reporting indicated benefits resulting from participation in contests suggests that most students believe commercial contests worth while. The following table gives the benefits resulting from contests as reported by the students. (Table XIII)

Seventy-five students developed wider interest as a result of participation in contests, while the same number of students gained new ideas. Seventy-two students learned improved methods from contests and 70 received encouragement from them, while 61 students gained self confidence from entering contests, and an equal number discovered the cause of failure. Twenty-one students gained recognition from contests while the same number found that contests provided recreation. Eleven students found that contests provided an opportunity to travel, and one student found that contests offered an opportunity to meet interesting people.

Several comments were made by students in regard to the benefits resulting from participation in contests. One student stated that "contest developed a desire for leadership."

Other comments were:

"Participation in contests developed a sense of discrimination in manufactures."

"Contests bridged my school life and actual life situations."

"Contest developed a desire to investigate advertising matter."

"Contest developed an appreciation of the above checked companies and caused me to discover the advantages and the limitations of each."

Table XIII

## Benefits of Contests Reported by Students

Benefits Received	No. of Students Reporting	Per cent of Students Participating
1. Developed wider interest	75	55.5
2. Gained new ideas	75	55.5
3. Received encouragement	72	53.3
4. Learned improved methods	70	53
5. Gained self confidence	61	46.9
6. Discovered cause of failure	61	46.9
7. Learned new procedures	53	40.7
8. Provided personal advancement	45	34.6
9. Provided recreation	21	16.1
10. Gained recognition	21	14.6
11. Had opportunity to travel	11	8.6
Others		
12. Met interesting people	1	.7
13. Enables me to now make my own clothes	1	.7
14. Learned new recipes	1	.7
15. For accomplishment gained	1	.7

Students were asked to indicate their reactions to contest. Although 135 students reported participation in contests, the greatest number of answers obtained to any reaction was 121 or 89.6 per cent of all reports received. Table XIV shows the students' reaction to contests.

Table XIV  
Students Reactions Toward Contests

Reaction	: Yes	: No	: Not Answering
1. Stimulated best effort	: 116	: 3	: 16
2. Enjoyed competing with others	: 116	: 6	: 10
3. Disappointing	: 15	: 93	: 22
4. Developed resentment	: 10	: 91	: 29
5. Worth trying again	: 121	:	: 11
6. Would like more contests	: 113	: 4	: 13
7. Developed pride in own entry	: 103	: 6	: 22
8. Believe contest require too much time	: 4	: 98	: 33
	:	:	:

All students who indicated their reactions toward contests considered them worth trying again. The same number of students enjoyed competing with others as found contests stimulated their best effort. One hundred and thirteen students, which is 94.1 per cent of those answering the question, would like more contests, yet Figure 3 indicates that 19 students had entered more than three contests. One hundred and three students developed pride in their own entry, and 98 students did not believe contests required too much time.

The information given in Table XIV appears to be further evidence of the students belief that contests are worth while, yet 15, or 13.3 per cent of the students indicating their reaction toward contests, regarded them as disappointing.



## PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

Often parents are able to observe results of contests which may not be obvious to teachers or classmates. Parents are also affected to a greater or less degree by daughters' participation in contests. For these reasons it was considered necessary to obtain information concerning the reactions of parents to the use of commercial contests. Reports were received from 54 parents who represent 29 communities. The information received from parents and from students came from the same localities.

Parents were asked for definite information regarding the affect of commercial contests upon their daughters. Table XV shows the reactions checked by the parents reporting.

Table XV

## Parents' Reactions to Daughters Entering Commercial Contests

Reaction Indicated	Number Reporting	Per cent Reporting
Think it will help her	35	62.5
Teacher should know best	17	25.9
Have never thought about it	7	12.9
Makes no difference	3	5.5
Do not want her to enter	1	1.7
Others		
Do not have time for contests	1	1.7
Makes daughter more willing to sew	1	1.7

Thirty-five, which is 62.5 per cent of the parents reporting, believed participation in contests would help daughter, while 17 parents thought the teacher should know best. Seven of the parents

had never thought about it, and to 3 parents it made no difference. One parent opposed the use of contests, while one found contests made daughter more willing to sew.

The results of contests are far reaching. They are not confined to the school alone but extend into the home and community. The observations of contests results made by the parents of the girls who participate in them reflects in some measure the reactions of the community toward contests. The following table shows the observations of contest results as indicated by the parents' reports.

Table XVI  
Parents' Observations of Contest Results

Observation	Number Replying	Percentage Replying
1. Improves the quality of work	29	53.7
2. Provides worth while experiences	27	50
3. Increases interest in school work	24	43.7
4. Encourages help at home	21	38.8
5. Shows parents what children can do	18	33.3
6. Those who excel deserve recognition	16	29.6
7. Provides recreation for some girls	14	25.9
8. Most girls do not have a chance	10	18.5
9. See no advantage	3	5.5
10. Takes too much school time	3	5.5
11. Costs too much	2	3.7
12. Requires too much home work	1	1.8
13. Encourages poor attitudes	1	1.8
Others		
14. Makes child more confident	1	1.8
15. A racket	1	1.8

More than half, or 53.7 per cent, of the parents had observed that contests improved the quality of work. Half, or 27 of the



parents reporting considered participation in contests a worth while experience, while almost as many had noticed that contests caused an increased interest in school work. While 21 parents found the contests encouraged girls to help more at home, two-thirds as many parents observed that contests provided recreation for some girls. Three parents could see no advantage of contests, while an equal number believed they required too much time. Two parents noticed that contests cost too much, while another parent thought contests encouraged poor attitudes. One parent considered contests a racket, yet another found they made the contestant more confident.

No group of people outside of school are more affected by contests than are the parents of the girls who participate in contests. Table XVII gives a summary of the parents' reports on how their daughters' participation in contests affected them.

Table XVII

How Parents are Affected by Daughters  
Participation in Contests

How Affected	Number Reporting	Per cent Reporting
Provided comparison of girls work	27	50
Learned new methods and procedure	23	41.8
Became better acquainted with teacher	20	37
Learned to appreciate daughters ability	20	37
Became better acquainted with school work	20	37
Became interested in community affairs	13	24
Became aware of advertising methods	12	22.2
Met other parents	11	20.3
Caused realization of daughters weakness	9	16.2
Developed ability to evaluate contests	7	12.9
Increased my regular responsibility	5	9.2
Developed a feeling of resentment	3	5.5

Twenty-seven, which is half of the parents reporting, found that contests provided a comparison of the girls work, while almost as many learned new methods and procedures as a result of contests. Twenty parents said that they became better acquainted with the teacher and with the school as a result of contests. Thirteen parents became interested in community affairs through contests, and twelve became aware of advertising methods. For 11 parents, contests provided a better understanding of daughter, while 9 parents found that contests caused a realization of daughters weakness. The regular responsibility of 5 parents was increased, and 3 parents developed a feeling of resentment as a result of daughters participation in contests.

In order to learn the mother-daughter relationship existing in the contests, parents were asked a series of questions. In answer to the question "Has daughter won an award?" twenty-one, or 38.8 per cent of the parents answered "yes", while twenty-two gave a negative reply. From this response it is evident that the reactions of the majority of parents toward the use of commercial contests was not necessarily influenced by the fact that daughter had won an award.

Only 36 of the parents answered the inquiry concerning the help received at home. Fourteen parents stated that daughter had received help at home, and 22 indicated that no help had been given.

Parents were also asked if they saw the contest, and according to the responses only 22 (40.7%) of the 54 parents reporting had seen the contest.

The fourth question inquired if parents and teachers shared the responsibility for preparing daughter for the contests. It was found that 26 of the 44 parents reporting had shared the responsibility. Parents were next asked if they had assumed the full responsibility for preparing daughter for the contests. According to the responses, only 4 parents had assumed the full responsibility, while 34 had not.



## CONCLUSION

From the results obtained in this survey it was found that the majority of companies which sponsored commercial contests for home making classes provided only local competition and the contests could be held any time during the school year. Few companies sponsored state wide contests, but several conducted nation wide contests. In these contests the final dates for receiving the entries were set by the sponsors. Most commercial concerns which conducted state wide and nation wide competitions offered cash awards. Other types of awards offered were prize ribbons, pins, and certificates. Contest awards were usually given by the company sponsoring the contest, but occasionally teachers, local merchants, or companies other than the sponsor offered duplicate or additional awards to the contestants.

Although most companies suggested or specified the points to be considered in judging the entries, this information was often worded in such a manner that it was ambiguous. The fact that many commercial concerns gave definite rules and regulations for conducting the competitions did not prevent some teachers from changing the contest to fit the local situation or from securing and distributing the contest material without conducting the contests.

Practically all companies which sponsor local contests requested reports on the contest held and asked that some publicity be given to the contest conducted. The most common type of publicity given to

contests was through exhibits or displays at school. More newspaper publicity was given to the announcements of contests than to contest results, and the teachers sent the sponsors reports on approximately one-fourth of the contests used.

Commercial contests were widely used by the teachers reporting. It was found that the teachers had used nineteen different contests, while students reported participating in twenty-two different contests. Although contests related to foods were the most numerous and included menu and recipe contests, essay contests, poster contests, and baking contests, only 35 teachers used these contests, while 42 teachers reported the use of sewing contests.

The contest most often used by the teachers reporting when listed in the order used are: The Simplicity Sewing Contest, the Rumford Home Baking Contest, the McCall Sewing Contest, the Meat Story Contest, and the Certificate of Award Contest. The contests least used were the Kraft Cheese Menu Contest, the Swans Down Cake Flour Contest, and the Local Newspaper Menu Contest.

There was a definite relation between the number of teachers using each contest and the number of students reporting participation in each contest. Commercial contests listed according to the number of students reporting participation in them are: The Simplicity Sewing Contest, the Rumford Home Baking Contest, the McCall Sewing Contest, and the Du Barry Sewing Contest.

There was no uniformity as to the number of contests used by each teacher reporting. While the majority of teachers had used only one contest, one teacher had used as many as ten contests,



and some students had participated in seven or eight contests.

The majority of teachers used contests to stimulate interest, and 88 of the 135 students reporting entered contests because they made the work more interesting. Through participation in commercial contests, students developed wider interest and gained new ideas, while parents found that daughters participation in contests provided a comparison of the girls work and helped them to learn new methods and procedures.

Commercial contests are generally considered valuable since 121 out of 135 students believed them worth trying again, and more than half of the parents reporting believed that contests were beneficial to their daughter. Most of the reactions indicated by parents were not the result of seeing the contest or the fact that daughter had won an award.

Very few students received help on the contests at home, and in most instances the teacher and parent shared the responsibility for preparing daughter for the contests.

Several teachers had discontinued commercial contests because too few students participated, while lack of teaching experience was the reason most often given for never having used commercial contests.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Contest Prizes: Twenty Million Americans Lured by \$12,000,000 Annual Offers. Literary Digest, November 2, 1936, Vol. 122, p. 7.

A P P E N D I X

Copy of the Letter sent to Home Economics Teachers

323 Murray Hall  
Stillwater, Oklahoma  
(date)

Dear Home Economics Teacher:

Last spring at the Southern Regional Conference in Birmingham, Alabama, state supervisors and teacher trainers in home economics education discussed "The Use of Commercial Contests in the Teaching of Home Economics." They decided that a more thorough study of the question should be made before any resolutions were adopted concerning the use of such contests. For my thesis I have chosen to make a study of "The Use of Commercial Contests in Home Making Classes in Oklahoma."

Enclosed you will find one questionnaire for your checking, two intended for parents, and five for students. I will appreciate your cooperation in answering the teacher's questionnaire and in securing the information desired from parents and students. Since contests affect parents and students, as well as teachers, it is imperative that their opinions and reactions be secured in order to complete my study.

Will you please ask two parents and five students to answer and return to you the questionnaires intended for their use. Postage is enclosed for the return of these questionnaires.

I will sincerely appreciate your help, for it is only through the assistance of the home economics teachers that this study is possible.

Very truly yours,

Blanche Randolph





### E. Source of Awards

A. Please check to indicate  
reasons for use

1. To stimulate interest
2. To interest patrons
3. To advertise school
4. To satisfy local custom  
or demand
5. To encourage home practice
6. To set up standards
7. To raise money
8. Requested of teacher by  
edu. official
9. To improve quality of work
10. Others

B. If you have discontinued the  
contest, indicate reasons

1. Caused antagonism among students
2. Contestants unfair
3. Too few students participated
4. Students became discouraged
5. Supt. opposes use of contests
6. Not worth teacher's time
7. Not worth pupil's time and effort
8. Others

A full-page view of a blank sheet of graph paper. The grid consists of small squares formed by thin black lines. In the top-left corner, there are two small numbers stacked vertically: "87" above "62". The rest of the page is empty except for the grid lines.

<u>Contest</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
1. Sewing - Advance Pattern Co.	
2. Sewing - Du Barry Pattern Co.	
3. Sewing - McCall's Pattern Co.	
4. Sewing - Gingham Girl Flour	
5. Sewing - Simplicity Pattern Co.	
6. Doll dress - Simplicity Pattern Co.	
7. Personality - Homemakers Edu. Ser.	
8. Standard H M Product Notebook Ser.	
9. Certificate of Award - H M Edu. Ser.	
10. How my Home Econ. helps me at home	
11. Dying - Dytint	
12. Baking - Rumford Baking Powder Co.	
13. Kitchen Planning - Crane Co.	
14. Essay on Meat - Nat'l Meat Board	
15. Poster on Meat - Nat'l Meat Board	
16. Textile Design - American Crayon Co.	
17. Block Print - C. Howard Hunt Pen Co.	
18. Menu & Recipe - Women's Nat'l Exp. of	
19. Others	Arts & Ind.



commercial contests,

indicate reasons

- [illegible]

1. Sewing - Advance Pattern Co.
2. Sewing - Du Barry Pattern Co.
3. Sewing - McCall's Pattern Co.
4. Sewing - Gingham Girl Flour
5. Sewing - Simplicity Pattern Co.
6. Doll dress - Simplicity Pattern Co.
7. Personality - Homemakers Edu. Ser.
8. Standard H M Product Notebook Ser.
9. Certificate of Award - H M Edu. Ser.
10. How my Home Econ. helps me at home
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13. Kitchen Planning - Crane Co.
14. Essay on Meat - Nat'l Meat Board
15. Poster on Meat - Nat'l Meat Board
16. Textile Design - American Crayon Co.
17. Block Print - C. Howard Hunt Pen Co.
18. Menu & Recipe - Women's Nat'l Exp. of
19. Others Arts & Ind.



# STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

## COMMERCIAL CONTESTS

1. Please indicate contests which you have entered. (x)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Sewing - McCall's Pattern Co. _____    | 12. Poster on Meat - Nat'l _____          |
| 2. Sewing - Advance Pattern Co. _____     | Livestock & Meat Board _____              |
| 3. Sewing - Gingham Girl Flour _____      | 13. Standard H M Product Notebook - _____ |
| 4. Sewing - DuBarry Pattern Co. _____     | Home Makers Educ. Service _____           |
| 5. Sewing - Simplicity Pattern _____      | 14. Personality - H M Edu.Ser. _____      |
| 6. Doll dress - Simplicity Pattern _____  | 15. Certificate of Award - Home _____     |
| 7. Block Print - C. Howard _____          | Makers Educational Service _____          |
| Hunt Pen Co. _____                        | 16. How My Home Econ. Edu. helps _____    |
| 8. Textile Design - C. Howard _____       | me at home - H. M. Edu.Ser. _____         |
| Hunt Pen Co. _____                        | 17. Dying - Dytint - H.M.Edu.Ser. _____   |
| 9. Baking - Rumford Baking Powder _____   | 18. Menu & Recipe - Women's Nat'l _____   |
| 10. Kitchen Planning - Crane Co. _____    | Exposition of Arts & Ind. _____           |
| 11. Essay on Meat - Nat'l Livestock _____ | 19. Others _____                          |
| & Meat Board _____                        |   |

II. Check Reasons for Entering Contests

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. To win an award _____                | 8. Needed the award _____         |
| 2. To show others I could win _____     | 9. Was selected _____             |
| 3. Was required to enter _____          | 10. Received higher grade _____   |
| 4. Because classmates did _____         | for entering _____                |
| 5. Provided a goal to work toward _____ | 11. To bring honor to the _____   |
| 6. Made the work more interesting _____ | school _____                      |
| 7. Wanted to learn something new _____  | 12. Felt I could win easily _____ |
|   | 13. Personal satisfaction _____   |
|   | received _____                    |
|   | 14. Others _____                  |

III. Indicate How you Benefited Personally from the Contests

- |                                       |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Received encouragement _____       | 7. Learned new procedures _____      |
| 2. Gained recognition _____           | 8. Provided recreation _____         |
| 3. Discovered cause of failures _____ | 9. Gained self confidence _____      |
| 4. Had opportunity to travel _____    | 10. Gained new ideas _____           |
| 5. Learned improved methods _____     | 11. Provided personal advance- _____ |
| 6. Developed wider interests _____    | ment _____                           |
|                                       | 12. Others _____                     |

## IV. Check to Show your reactions to Contests

YesNo

1. Stimulated best effort

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Enjoyed competing with others

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Disappointing

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Developed resentment

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Worth trying again

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Would like more contests

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Developed pride in own entry

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Believe contests require too much time

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Others

# P A R E N T S   Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

## COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN HOME ECONOMICS

I. Please check to show how you feel about your daughter entering commercial contests.(x)

- |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Think it will help her _____      | 4. Do not want her to enter _____ |
| 2. Makes no difference _____         | 5. Teacher should know _____      |
| 3. Have never thought about it _____ | best _____                        |
|                                      | 6. Others _____                   |

II. Check the statement which most nearly expresses your observations of contest results.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Encourage girls to help more at home _____   | 8. Improve the quality of work _____         |
| 2. Require too much work at home _____          | 9. Those who excel deserve recognition _____ |
| 3. Increase interest in school work _____       | 10. Cost too much _____                      |
| 4. Most girls do not have a chance to win _____ | 11. Can see no special advantage _____       |
| 5. Show parents what children can do _____      | 12. Provide recreation for some girls _____  |
| 6. Take too much school time _____              | 13. Encourage poor attitudes _____           |
| 7. Provide worthwhile experiences _____         | 14. Others _____                             |

III. Check to indicate how your daughter's participation in contests affected you.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Became acquainted with schoolwork _____           | 8. Learned new methods and procedures _____      |
| 2. Became better acquainted with teacher _____       | 9. Met other parents _____                       |
| 3. Became aware of advertising methods _____         | 10. Became interested in community affairs _____ |
| 4. Provided better understanding of daughter _____   | 11. Developed ability to evaluate contests _____ |
| 5. Caused realization of daughter's weaknesses _____ | 12. Increased my regular responsibilities _____  |
| 6. Developed a feeling of resentment _____           | 13. Provided comparisons of girls work _____     |
| 7. Learned to appreciate daughter's ability _____    |  |

IV. Please check to indicate mother-daughter relationships in contests:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Has daughter won an award?	_____	_____
Had she received help in the contest at home?	_____	_____
Did you see the contest?	_____	_____
Did you and the teacher share responsibility for preparing daughter for contests	_____	_____
Did you assume full responsibility for preparing your daughter for the contest?	_____	_____



Typist:

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